



I Cannot Go with These

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David uttered the words of the title in the midst of fear and reproach on every hand, and with Israel's armies fleeing in defeat. Nonetheless, God's chosen and prepared servant went forth fearlessly to the conflict in full confidence of victory, relying for his strength and power upon the Lord alone. Saul, backslidden and forsaken of God, had lost all his courage and power. But he still wanted to put his own armor on David.

Thus a cold form of godliness today insists upon putting its carnal armor upon the faithful servants of the Lord, raised up by God. Thus, he who would prevail in this holy warfare against the overwhelming forces of darkness and evil that come in upon us in these days as a flood, must not put on the fleshly armor of a powerless and apostate Christianity from which God has withdrawn Himself.

"And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them. And David put them off him." 1 Sa. 17:39 He not only had to see that these things were going to be hindrance to him, but he had to actually take them off. Weighed down thus, he would never have been able to conquer his powerful foe. He said, "I have not proved them." What proof have we made of all this man-made armor of these days, when a form of godliness denies the power thereof, that we should put it on to better equip us in our efforts to lift up the standard of God's Word against the power of the enemy?

What revival of God's power and working has all this man-made machinery brought to us since we have depart-

ed from the simplicity of the gospel? The committees and the organizations; the programs and the entertainments; the vain display and seeking and receiving honor to the flesh, and the giving of it to others as an inducement to greater effort and zeal; the musical attractions; the emphasis on educational attainments; and the recreational projects that are to serve as a bait to lure the young into the gospel net: what proof of its virtue has all this humanly devised armor given us that we should put it on as we seek to go forth against the coldness and deadness all about us unto victory in the name of Jesus our Lord, until the revival fires of the Holy Spirit and His burning love are kindled again in the hearts and lives of His people?

Have not simplicity and humility and separation from what is worldly and fleshly been always characteristic of the time of true revival and manifestation of God's power? And has not the astonishing growth and multiplication of these carnal means and methods within Evangelical religion been marked by so great and unprecedented a withdrawal of the glory and presence and working of the Holy Spirit, that all can see that professed Christianity is being left to its own coldness and deadness, while sin rages on every hand unrebuked, and the world rushes to the swift destruction that awaits it?

May God help us to reject all this carnal armor, which not only has not been proven and tried and found true in the holy warfare, but which has been fully proven to be the powerless weapons and defense of an apostate church.

Where God works, He will be glorified, and He will manifest Himself according to His will. But all this human machinery and display give the Holy Spirit no place nor room to manifest Himself. When we let the Lord clean out the temple, He will fill it with His glory. As we read the records of revival in many different times and places, we cannot help but notice how God worked outside of the ordinary and expected channels, where the human systems would have choked out the workings of God's Spirit. Often times envy, as with the Pharisees, would raise up a storm of persecution, but God worked through men who were willing to follow His plan at the cost of all things. Through faithful men, a great victory was gained for God. And over and over again we have seen these times of refreshing followed so soon by a spiritual decline and backsliding, as the newly imparted spiritual life began to mold itself into another human system, and the revival fires began to die out and the spirit of worldly apostasy began to work.

No, we cannot go forward and gain victories for God that He sets before us until we put off all this unproved and untried armor of the flesh, and go only in the strength

and power of the Lord God. The early church had none of the present-day accompaniments to religion. They served God in the simplicity of the gospel and relied upon Him: and He wrought wonders!

In a generation, the message was proclaimed far and wide over the known world, in the power of the Spirit.

Who will forsake completely the worldliness and the empty forms of these days of apostasy, and learn from God's word and from the example of the primitive church the pure worship that God will own and bless?

They didn't have to advertise and lure the people in by worldly expedients. The power of the Spirit was manifested, they relied upon Him, and He did the work.

We know that the Christian life is a supernatural life. We know that this is so in the individual soul or life: That it is not our own works, but "Christ in us the hope of glory" who is manifested by faith through a life wholly yielded and separated unto Him alone. Then why must we believe

that the church—which is composed of souls and lives yielded to God and led and moved by His Spirit—must be organized, led, and controlled by the hand of man, and filled with men's works and plans of a godless age in order to function at all? It seems that there can scarcely be found one group that is not swallowed up in the spirit of social activity and entertainment and in the multiplied works and programs of man's own making. It seems that a people can scarcely be found where pride and the flesh are not on display, drawing attention to itself. There are suppers and parties and youth activities of various kinds that keep the young people active in the church, but which never lead them into the living fountains of waters that Christ has for those who seek His face.

Christ said, "Let the dead bury the dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." When will the church be ready to let the world carry on the material things of this world, and devote themselves to the one task of proclaiming the everlasting gospel in the power of the Spirit to a lost and perishing world? There is an attraction and a power in the simple preaching of the word of God—when the Holy Spirit anoints—which draws and satisfies the hungry soul, and which does not require as a prelude a musical entertainment.

If we trust the Spirit of God to lead us in His way in our own personal life, why not trust Him to lead us in our public worship, into the pure worship in spirit and truth that God seeks from His creatures, and which He will accept? If we cannot come before God individually in our own dead and empty works, why should we offer to Him the works of our own hands in our public assemblies? If we live thus in our personal lives, in our own way and works, they will be empty and void of His presence and power; and this is not less in the church?

Where is the people who will have the courage to put off all these heavy weights that the enemy has loaded upon us, to follow from henceforth the simplicity of the gospel, the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints?" Who will forsake completely the worldliness and the empty forms of these days of apostasy, and learn from God's word and from the example of the primitive church the pure worship that God will own and bless, and through which He will manifest Himself in working a mighty work of salvation in the hearts and lives of men?

As we pray for revival, and that God may make us strong soldiers for Him, able to defeat a powerful and wily foe, and to rescue precious souls from the clutches of Satan, let us pray for God to give us grace and courage to put off the armor like David did; the carnal armor of an apostate generation from which God has departed. And let us pray that we may be clothed with the armor of God, that we may be able to stand in the evil day, and to stand against all the wiles of the devil. Like David, we cannot go forth and prevail with unproven armor; we cannot go forth to victory carrying these things.

May we through the name of Jesus put on the whole armor of righteousness, "on the right hand and on the left," and may we take unto ourselves "the weapons of our warfare, which are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds"; the armor which has been tried all down through the ages, and which has stood the test of every battle. ~

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